

In the Claims

Please cancel claims 11 and 31 and amend claims 1, 4, 12, 17, 21, and 27 as follows:

1. (Currently amended) A surgical ring (1), designed to be implanted in the body of a patient around a-biological organ to form a pouch or a duct, in order to modify the cross-sectional area of a passage of the organ when it is tightened by the ring, the ring (1) comprising:

a flexible band (2), comprising first and second extremities (3,4), the flexible band (2) being designed to be closed near these two extremities (3,4) by a closure system to form a closed ring, the said closed ring having an internal contact surface (2A) with the biological organ and an opposite external surface (2B); and

wherein the closure system comprises a means of encircling (5) united to the first extremity (3) and arranged to evolve between:

a de-latching configuration where the means of encircling (5) forms an open collar freeing the second extremity (4); and

a latching configuration where the means of encircling (5) forms a closed collar designed to surround the second extremity (4) so as to unite it with the first extremity (3), the closed collar presenting opposite front (6) and rear faces(7), between which an encircling opening extends, which is designed to accept the second extremity (4),

wherein the means of encircling (5) further comprises a male element (8) and a female element (9), each of which is mounted integrally to the first extremity (3) and mounted on or relative to the latter in such a way that, when they are connected together, the means of encircling (5) is latched, forming the closed collar, and

wherein the second extremity (4) of ring (1) further comprises a first means of stopping (16) designed to thrust against the rear face (7) of the closed collar surrounding the second extremity (4) of the ring in latching configuration, so as to prevent the shifting of the second extremity (4) in the opening direction of ring (1).

2. (Previously presented) The surgical ring (1) according to claim 1, wherein the means of encircling (5) is arranged so as to pass reversibly between the de-latching and the latching configurations.

3. (Canceled).

4. (Currently Amended) The surgical ring (1) according to claim ~~3~~ 1, wherein the female element (9) further comprises an orifice (9A) through its full thickness, between opposite first and second sides (9B, 9C), the male element (8) further comprises a tab designed to be slid into orifice (9A), the tab being provided with a means of blockage (8A, 8B) which works in conjunction with orifice (9A).

5. (Previously presented) The surgical ring (1) according to claim 4, wherein tab (8) further comprises a link extremity (10) attached to the external surface of the ring (1) and a free extremity (11), the female element (9) being likewise attached to the external surface of the ring with regard to the tab (8), in such a way as the closed collar extends towards the exterior of the ring (1).

6. (Previously presented) The surgical ring (1) according to claim 5, wherein tab (8) further comprises a first means of support (8A), which forms a first means of

blocking and is designed to act as a support against peripheral edge (13) of orifice (9A) on the first side (9B) of female element (9) and, a second means of support (8B) which forms the second means of blocking and is designed to act as a support against the peripheral edge of orifice (9A) on the second side (9C) of female element (9), the second means of support being shaped to cooperate with orifice (9A) like a cam in a bearing, the first and second means of support (8A, 8B) being arranged relative to each other so that, in latch configuration, they are tightened around the female element (9) so as to ensure a stable latching configuration.

7. (Previously presented) The surgical ring (1) according to claim 6, wherein tab (8) further comprises a shoulder (8A), which defines a support surface forming a first means of support, and a flexible extension (8B) forming a second means of support, the free extremity (11) of tab (8) being shaped so as to act as the first prehension support, the first prehension support allowing tab (8) and flexible extension (8B) to pass through orifice (9A), so as to form the closed collar.

8. (Previously presented) The surgical ring (1) according to claim 4, wherein tab (8) further comprises a chamfered profile to facilitate its introduction and passage into orifice (9A).

9. (Previously presented) The surgical ring (1) according to claim 7, wherein ring (1) further comprises a second prehension support (15) which extends near the extremity of link (10) of tab (8), the second prehension support (15) permitting holding ring (1) during the process of

separating the male (8) and female (9) elements, carried out so as to open the ring (1).

10. (Previously presented) The surgical ring (1) according to claim 9, wherein the female element (9) features a third prehension support (9) which permits separation of male and female elements, so as to open the ring (1).

11. (Cancelled).

12. (Currently Amended) The surgical ring (1) according to claim ~~11~~ 1, wherein the second extremity (4) of ring (1) further comprises a second means of stopping (17), designed to thrust against the front face (6) of the closed collar surrounding the second extremity (4) of ring (1) in latching configuration, so as to prevent shifting of the second extremity (4) in the closing direction of ring (1).

13. (Previously presented) The surgical ring (1) according to claim 12, wherein the first and second means of stopping (16, 17) are arranged relative to each other so as to tighten the closed collar (5) between them in the latching configuration, so as to substantially prevent any shifting of the second extremity (4) relative to the first extremity (3).

14. (Previously presented) The surgical ring (1) according to claim 1, wherein flexible band (2) further comprises a portion of reduced cross-sectional area (18) at the level of the second extremity (4) of ring (1), the portion (18) being designed to be lodged laterally in a recess (19B), of a shape complementarily arranged at the level of the first extremity (3), the recess (19) forming part of the closed

collar in latching configuration, so as to ensure continuity of the internal surface (2A) of ring (1).

15. (Previously presented) The surgical ring (1) according to claim 14, wherein flexible band (2) further comprises a shoulder (17) at the level of the transition of the portion of reduced cross-section (18), the shoulder (17) acting as a second means of stopping.

16. (Previously presented) The ring (1) according to claim 15, wherein the flexible band (2) and the closure system (5) form a single piece made of the same material.

17. (Currently Amended) The ring (1) according to claim ~~14~~ 1, further comprising a system (19, 23, 26, 27, 28) to reversibly control the variation of an internal perimeter, the system (19, 23, 26, 27, 28) comprising a flexible filiform element (19) inserted longitudinally and by sliding into the material (24) forming the body of ring (1), substantially between the first and second extremities (3, 4) so as to define a fixed portion (19A) united to the first extremity (3) and a free portion (21) functionally associated with an actuator (23) mounted on ring (1), such that actuator (23) can ensure reversible translation of flexible filiform element (19) so as to obtain an associated variation of the diameter of ring (1).

18. (Previously presented) The ring (1) according to claim 17, wherein actuator (23) is arranged on ring (1) to constitute the first means of stopping (16).

19. (Previously presented) The ring (1) according to claim 1, wherein the ring is formed of a gastric ring designed to be implanted around the stomach or esophagus.

20. (Previously presented) The ring (1) according to claim 1, wherein the ring is designed to be implanted around one of the group consisting of: a bladder, a urinary tract, a gastro-intestinal tract, and a blood vessel.

21. (Currently Amended) A ring designed to be implanted in the body of a patient around a biological organ to form a pouch or a duct, the ring comprising:

a flexible band having first and second extremities;  
a tension element slidably disposed within the flexible band;

an actuator disposed on the second extremity of the flexible band, the actuator engaging the tension element so that operation of the actuator causes the tension element to constrict the flexible band against the biological organ; and

a closure system having a latched configuration and a de-latched configuration, the closure system comprising a male element and a female element mounted on the first extremity, the male element configured to be selectively interengage the female element to form a closed collar that encircles the second extremity of the flexible band in the latched configuration.

22. (Previously presented) The ring of claim 21, wherein the male element is configured to reversibly interengage the female element.

23. (Previously presented) The ring of claim 21, wherein the female element defines an orifice and the male

element comprises a tab configured to pass through the orifice.

24. (Previously presented) The ring of claim 21, wherein each of the male and female elements is joined at one extremity to an external surface of the ring.

25. (Previously presented) The ring of claim 23, wherein tab further comprises a first surface that contacts to a first side of the female element to limit passage of the tab through the orifice, and a second surface that contacts a second side of the female element to retain the closure system in the latched configuration.

26. (Previously presented) The ring of claim 23, wherein tab has a chamfered profile that facilitate introduction and passage of the tab through the orifice.

27. (Currently Amended) The ring of claim 21, wherein the second extremity comprises a first stop configured to abut against a rear face of the closure system in the latched configuration.

28. (Previously presented) The ring of claim 27, wherein the second extremity further comprises a second stop configured to abut against a front face of the closure system in the latched configuration.

29. (Previously presented) The ring of claim 28, wherein flexible band further comprises a portion of reduced cross-sectional area between the first and second stops.

30. (Previously presented) The ring of claim 21, wherein the flexible band and the closure system are integrally formed from a single piece of material.

31. (Cancelled) .

32. (Previously presented) The ring of claim 21, wherein the ring is configured to be implanted around one of a patient's stomach, esophagus, bladder, urinary tract, gastrointestinal tract or blood vessel.